

Blue Shield of California to Cover H1N1 Flu Vaccine Administration for All Members

San Francisco, Calif. (September 9, 2009) – Blue Shield of California announced today that it will cover the administrative costs of the H1N1 virus (swine flu) vaccine for all its members, regardless of which plan they have. Blue Shield will be waiving prior authorizations, copays and deductibles for office visits when members go to an in-network doctor to get H1N1 vaccinations.

The U.S. Government will be providing H1N1 vaccinations (including the equipment, like syringes) free of charge. While providers will initially focus vaccination efforts on the most at-risk populations, members of all groups will be covered.

Blue Shield of California also provides prescription drug coverage for Tamiflu (oseltamivir) and Relenza (zanamivir)—the two anti-viral drugs used to treat flu symptoms. The company has designated both drugs as Tier One prescriptions, which reduces the copayment that members make to get the medication. Coverage is also being extended for conditions authorized by the FDA under Emergency Use Authorization. This coverage applies to all members.

“We stand ready to help our members in every way possible,” said Meredith Mathews, MD, chief medical officer of Blue Shield of California. “We want to make it easy and affordable for everyone to get the care they need.”

In addition, Blue Shield will be providing H1N1 educational materials to members in order to familiarize them with both prevention and treatment options.

Blue Shield of California continues to monitor the H1N1 influenza outbreak closely. The facts of the outbreak and the flu virus are rapidly changing, so please refer to the CDC website or call 800-CDC-INFO (1-800-232-4636) or e-mail: cdcinfo@cdc.gov for emerging details.

Background on Blue Shield of California

Blue Shield of California, an independent member of the Blue Shield Association, is a not-for-profit health plan dedicated to providing Californians with access to high quality care at a reasonable price. Founded in 1939, it now has 3.4 million members, 4,800 employees, one of the largest provider networks and more than 20 office locations, providing a wide range of commercial and government products throughout the state. The company has contributed \$100 million over the past three years to the Blue Shield of California Foundation to fund nonprofit organizations that improve access to quality health care in California. Contact your local agent or broker for more information about Blue Shield products and services, or visit the Blue Shield web site at www.blueshieldca.com.